

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION**

Please amend the specification as follows:

[0037] FIG. 2 is a message sequence chart illustrating one example of the initialization operation and a renegotiation operation according to the present invention. On FIG. 2, the initialization process is invoked in the protocol layers, 102 and 103, when the devices, 100 and 101, are powered on. Responsive to the devices, 100 and 101, powering on, one of the protocol layers, 102 and 103, provides a synchronization request message to the other one of the protocol layers, 102 and 103, that includes at least one exchange rate. In this case, the protocol layer 102 provides the synchronization request message. The at least one exchange rate, e.g., a first exchange rate, could be any exchange rate supported by the device 100. For example, the at least one exchange rate could be a system default exchange rate for communications between the protocol layers, 102 and 103. The at least one exchange rate could also be a plurality of exchange rates supported by the device 100.

Please amend the specification as follows:

[0039] Responsive to receiving the synchronization request message from the protocol layer 102, the protocol layer 103 processes the synchronization request message to generate a synchronization acknowledgment message for the protocol layer 102. The synchronization acknowledgment message includes an exchange rate, e.g., a second exchange rate, supported by the device 101, that is equal too or lower than the highest exchange rate provided by the protocol layer 102, and which becomes the negotiated exchange rate. For example, if the at least one exchange rate provided in the synchronization request message is a default for communication exchange between the protocol layers, 102 and 103, the protocol layer 103 returns the default exchange rate in the synchronization acknowledgment message. If the at least one exchange rate provided in the synchronization request message is a plurality of exchange rates supported by the device 100, then the protocol layer 103 returns one of the plurality of exchange rates that is also supported by the device 101.